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# MS 661 Urban Issues: Chicago

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# **MS661: URBAN ISSUES/CHICAGO**

## **Christian Center for Urban Studies At Olive Branch Mission**

### **“Communities of Diversity” Miniterm Syllabus, 2003 Revised 4/16/03**

#### **Course Description & Purpose**

This course is designed to provide a brief but intensive life experience, in which a student is provided with beginning concepts to grasp and begin to understand the urban community and its multitude of diversity. You will wrestle with the issues of poverty, racism, sociology, community development, and social justice through the lens of those who live it daily. The miniterm experience will incorporate four major sections: 'Orientation,' getting to know Olive Branch Mission, surrounding communities, and Chicago as a whole; 'Black Chicago,' a time in which you will participate in classes and site visits rich with the history and knowledge of the African American Community; 'Latino Perspective' is designed to indoctrinate you to the vast array of programs and services in place that work in and with our various Latino communities and how they function with success, as well as inform you on Latino culture and tradition; and 'Middle Eastern Mindset,' will provide each student with an opportunity to step out into the Middle Eastern/South Asian community and to learn about family, religion, and the rich heritage behind our Arabic and Indo-Pakistani people in Chicago. Paired with each section on culture, student will have an opportunity to put planning and heart into practice on an every day level, volunteering, mentoring, advocating, and ministering in the communities in which they will be learning. Seminary and Social Work tracks are available in order to accommodate those who need more than the average number of internship hours.

#### **Objectives**

1. Explore the City of Chicago and three of the major ethnic communities.
2. Increase your understanding and knowledge of yourself and your own stereotypes, expectations, and attitudes in relation to others, particularly in the urban and cross-cultural context.
3. Increase your knowledge of at least three major ethnic groups in Chicago, understanding their history, family systems, religious beliefs, and community dynamics.
4. Gain knowledge of systems in place in community.
5. Glean a greater understanding of how programs and services can be implemented while promoting integrity and wholeness of self in communities of racial diversity and/or socio-economic struggle.
6. Engage in social justice issues and learn to understand systemic community dynamics first hand.
7. Practice service in community living among the CCUS student body and the greater OBM family and programs.

8. Begin to understand and discern what God may have placed on your life in response to urban, cultural, religious, and socio-economic realities.

### **Text**

*Breckenridge, James & Lillian (1995). What Color Is Your God? Multicultural Education in the Church. Baker Books, Grand Rapids: MI.*

### **Class Topics**

- Orientation:  
CCUS Welcome  
Olive Branch Mission, History and Programs  
Welcome to the Neighborhood  
Chicago & CTA at Your Service
- Class #1: Encountering Culture  
Cross Cultural Awareness  
Personal Identity  
Dialogue and Conversation  
Reaching Across Community Lines
- Class #2: Black Chicago: Sharing Our Journeys  
An African American Highlight  
Agencies in partnership across community: Englewood Cares  
The African American Church
- Class #3: Black Chicago: Past and Present  
DuSable Museum of African American History  
Dixie Kitchen
- Class #4: Latino Perspective – The Puerto Rican Story  
La Casa Central: Families and Youth in Community  
The Gap: Community Ministry
- Class #5: Latino Perspective – The Mexican Community  
La Villita Community Church: Outreach in Little Village  
Resurrection Project: Community Development in Pilsen  
Mexican Fine Arts Museum
- Class #6: Middle Eastern Mindset – More Than Just Religion  
South Asian Friendship Center: Ministry at Work  
Thai Buddhist Temple  
Visit to a local Mosque

### **Course Requirements for Undergraduate Work**

Journal (3 @ 25 points each)	75
Practicum Assignment	100
Ministry Project	100
Position Paper	125
Participation & Class Attendance	100

<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>
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**Course Requirements for Graduate Work**

Journal (3 @ 25 points each)	75
Practicum Assignment	125
Ministry Project	100
Case Study	100
Participation & Class Attendance	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>

**Grading System**

475-500	A
463-474	A-
450-462	B+
425-449	B
413-424	B-
400-412	C+
375-399	C
363-374	C-
350-362	D+
325-349	D
313-324	D-
00-312	U

**Coursework**

**Journal:** At the end of each day, choose one or two particular experiences or images that affected you (e.g. something you say, heard, learned; someone you talked with). Reflect on this and give it some expression (e.g. critical reflection, emotional response, poetry, drawing, a letter). Although completion does count in your final grade, this portion of your journal is neither read nor individually graded, it is personal. Three times during the miniterm you will reflect on your journal reflections. To what issues or concerns have you been responding? What patterns do you see? Why have they touched you? How are they significant for your understanding of the city and your theology? During the morning class session at the end of each week, you will hand in your journal, which will be graded and returned to you asap. These three journal reflections will be individually read and graded. Please limit the three comprehensive reflections to two pages each, hand written, or one page each typed.

**Ministry Project:**

This project is a group effort and will be graded as such. The project includes intensive research and study in a Chicago neighborhood, ie: Pilsen, Humboldt Park, Devon Avenue, etc. As a group, you will be assigned a specific community and asked to draw on community leaders, neighborhood families, ethnic art centers, etc. to prepare a group presentation on your findings.

Each small group will receive a detailed assignment and mission statements specific to their community during the miniterm orientation.

**Case Study (graduate level students only):** Each graduate student will write and present one case study. The event should arise in the context of your ministry placement and you should have had a significant role in that event. Follow the *Case Study Guidelines* provided by the CCUS and/or your Ministries Office on campus.

**Position Paper (Undergrad level students only):**

The Position Paper is designed to be a tool to assist you with processing your experience and outlining steps for the future. This is not a final journal summary, but rather a position paper highlighting one portion of your learning throughout the Miniterm experience and detailing how your experience has effected you. You should pick one particular topic of interest to you, ie: 'Teaching in the Urban Environment,' 'Community Development in the Latino Neighborhood,' or 'Outreach to Muslim Youth,' for example.

You will be required to develop a position paper outlining what your perspective on this particular topic was prior to the Miniterm and how that has been altered or changed as a result of your experience. Please include at least 6 resources on a formal bibliography page, including at least one (but no more than two) interview. Use your research and your experience to guide the process, giving a personal reflection of your thoughts. The paper should be 4-6 pages in length (typed).

**Please note: All journals and papers MUST be typed or printed - no can ready, no can grade.**

**Practicum Assignments**

Students will be assigned to a Practicum placement according to their major and/or listed objectives on the Miniterm Application. During the middle portion of each week, you will go out into the communities about which you are learning for direct service opportunities. These experiences are assigned per individual and you will spend a full three days per week on site. This portion of the miniterm will count for your internship credit. *Students participating for SWK Practicum or Seminary credit will have assignments prepared to facilitate additional hours in order to complete the necessary Practicum hours for your academic credit.*

**Participation and Class Attendance:**

Participation and attendance is a huge part of your CCUS/Chicago experience. You will be addressing issues, evaluating experiences, dealing with exposure to new places, people, and happenings. Processing time is also crucial. In fact, you may find that you cannot complete a day with it! Your participation is not only expected, but deeply valued and appreciated. As part of this grade, you will be expected to attend all scheduled classes and activities and participate accordingly.

## **Addendum to the Syllabus**

### **"Communities of Diversity"**

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- 1. Seminary Student not in the MDIV program:** We will evaluate this based on a case-by-case scenario. If you are not an MDIV student, but you are working on your graduate degree you may choose to do one of the following: either complete the case study assignment with the MDIV students (as explained during our syllabus review), or you may do the an advanced level Position Paper requiring 10 sources, 3 interviews, and totaling 10-12 pages in length.
- 2. Practicum Credit Only Students:** (ie: Taylor SWK students or students not taking the class for cross cultural credit or CMI) You are required to do additional internship hours, in most cases, as well as special assignments from your home base professors. You are not required to do the Position Paper. If you are a Taylor SWK student, you are required to meet with the OBM SWK supervisor individually at least two times during the miniterm for supervision.
- 3. CMI Spring Arbor University Students:** You are required to do the advanced level Position Paper. Your paper must be specifically related to your particular major and focused within the context of urban ministry, ie: a psychology major could choose to do 'Christian Counseling with the African American Family in the Urban Church.' The paper should have 10 sources, 3 interviews, and total 10-12 pages in length.